

and descriptive There, the clear stream of narrative is never broken by argument, nor the steady progress of building up the picture delayed by moralising The fruits of the judgment and the self-control exercised in Volume I are reaped in the later chapters of Volume II There, the reader, literally possessed by facts so put before him that he feels them to be facts and nothing but facts, is lifted up above them, on the wings of an argument so sure and powerful that he is carried along, quite unresisting, and absolutely absorbed in the pleasant sense of confidence in the skill, authority, vision and reliability of his pilots He has been given, in *Trade Unionism*, the background of history, before he is invited to take, or make, any judgments on the ideas of Trade Unionists

That the authors themselves had no "point of view" they never maintained There is a story which figures among the many, legendary and otherwise, that have gathered around the name of Webb, to the effect that Levine, the French economist, after a visit to 41, Grosvenor Road, reported,

"Yes, yes, they have got the facts All the facts But if any fact goes against their theories, so much the worse for the fact"

Reviewers, later, familiar with their practice of making notes on separate slips, at times suggested that some awkward slip had fallen beneath the table, and been conveniently left there But against such criticisms must be set this the general view they hold, whose possession they never denied, ran counter to the general view held by most of

their critics, who tended to regard the latter,
tpso *facto*,
as "the facts " The Webbs never made a
secret of their
own view; but no critic has succeeded in
convicting them
of any distortion in its interest No one has
accused them,
on the other hand, of that dulness of
approach involved
in the attempt to apply the really impossible
theory that
history should be written without any "point
of view"
If the student must absorb and dissect facts.